REMARKS

The application has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 9 has been incorporated into claim 1.

The claims have been amended to remedy the stated bases of rejection under section 112, second paragraph. Withdrawal of this rejection is solicited.

The new claims read on the elected species of Figures 1-2.

Claims 1, 2, 6, 9, and 10 were rejected as obvious over PALMER in view of COOKE and MOREYRA.

The Official Action did not address the features recited by claim 9, i.e., that said compressible material (10, 17) has a rounded form with extra thickness in its center area.

Further, none of the applied references teach or suggest removable separating elements intended to be removably inserted in a channel. Note that COOKE teaches stand alone, independent units (Figure 14) that need not and are not intended to by removably inserted in a channel. See that base 40 and rigid element 41 obviate any need for a case with a channel. The combination of PALMER and COOKE is an improper application of hindsight.

Further, none of the references teach or suggest that the compressible material has a rounded form with extra thickness in its center area.

Without these features, the claims are non-obvious and should be allowed.

See published application paragraph [0018] disclosing that "Said compressible material may also be rounded, with extra thickness in its center part."

Also see the disclosure beginning at paragraph [0038] that, as shown on Fiugre 1b, the compressible material 10 has a rounded form with extra thickness in its center area. This plays an important role in holding the objects. When the separating element 7 is inserted in the channel 6 of the base 1 and compact discs 13 inserted in the spaces 14 open at the top and defined by the various portions of the separating element 7. The length of the separating element 7 is selected such that when the separating element 7 is inserted in the channel 6, the spaces 14 have a reduced or even zero width so that the discs 13 can be firstly inserted and secondly held under the effect of resistance to the opposing compression by the material 10. The discs 13 come to rest against the edges of the front face 2 and rear face 3 of the base 1, and can be withdrawn instantaneously from the storage element by simple traction.

From the above, there is an advantage of providing a center area with an increased relative thickness so that the objects are more tightly held.

As to claim 6, see paragraph [0040] disclosing that the concertina-like separating element 7 may be a single element, or

several such elements 7 can be placed next to each other in the channel 6. This allows a particular advantage in that it allows an easier folding of the elements at its folding line, while keeping sufficiently high holding pressure on the objects. Also, the pressure exerted on the material at the folding lines tends to increase the pressure exerted in the center area of the elements.

There are no such teachings in the applied art. Accordingly, these features are non-obvious.

Additionally, PALMER (Figure 7) discloses a base with a convex bottom. It clear that the PALMER Figure 14 element does not provide an appropriate removably insertable separating element as PALMER has a planar bottom and the elements 41 are attached orthogonally to the base 40. If the base 40 were made convex, the element 41 then provides a "V" space that would not effectively hold objects.

Further, PALMER no separating elements (elements 126 are indexation means) and needs no separating elements.

Even if COOKE were said to disclose rigid separating elements covered by a protective material, were applicant denies, there is no reason to enclose both the flexible material 42 and elements 41 in a material not damaging to the objects being stored. At best, one of skill would only cover material 42. There would be no reason to also cover elements 41, and indeed covering both elements 41 and flexible material 42, in a material

not damaging to the object, would be counter-intuitive as this would be less easy to clean than covering only flexible material 42.

As to the new claims, the references do not teach the recited combination of features, i.e., a concertina separating element removably inserted in the base, wherein,the separating element is foldable, at a series of transverse fold lines, from an elongated form to a compacted form with a concertina shape for insertion into the base, the separating element comprises i) a core of a rigid material with an elongated form and foldable at the fold lines, ii) a layer of a compressible material at a surface of the core, and iii) an envelope which surrounds both the core and the compressible material, the envelope providing a contact surface for objects to be stored in the device and made of a material not damaging to the objects, and the compressible material has a rounded form with extra thickness in its center area for holding the objects.

The references do not teach or suggest that the core is cardboard, the compressible material is a cotton wool arranged on the surface of the core, and the envelope is a viscose-acetate velvet.

Reconsideration and allowance of all the claims are therefore solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any

overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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